

## Message Text

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ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 FBIE-00  
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O 221701Z MAR 77

FM AMCONSUL MATAMOROS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 288

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS MATAMOROS 0032

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC, MX

SUBJECT: W/W: CASE OF PERRY LEE GREER, JR.

REF: STATE 062558

SUMMARY: ON MARCH 16TH A KENTUCKY MAN, PERRY L. GREER,  
PAID US\$14,000.00 RANSOM TO DEPUTY CHIEF OF MATAMOROS POLICE  
OSCAR VILLARREAL, WHO DELIVERED GREER'S 19-YEAR-OLD SON UNHARMED  
AFTER HAVING HELD HIM FOR 24 HOURS IN THREE PRIVATE HOMES.  
THE ABDUCTOR KEPT LEE'S 1976 BUICK REGAL AND DEMANDED US\$6,000.00  
FOR ITS RETURN. ON MARCH 17TH MR. GREER REPORTED MATTER TO  
CONSUL WHO APPEALED TO STATE AND GOM AUTHORITIES FOR ASSISTANCE.  
IDENTITY OF ABDUCTOR OF COURSE WAS NOT KNOWN AT THE TIME.  
UNDER PEREMTORY ORDERS FROM MEXICO'S ATTORNEY GENERAL AND FROM  
THE GOVERNOR OF TAMAULIPAS, ENRIQUE CARDENAS, CASE WAS CRACKED  
WIDE OPEN IN LESS THAN 34 HOURS AND THE MONEY AND CAR WERE  
RECOVERED. VILLARREAL, WHO ALLEGEDLY WAS BORN IN THE  
U.S., IS AT LARGE AND BELIEVED TO BE SOMEWHERE IN THE U.S.

A MASSIVE SHAKEUP OF THE MATAMOROS' POLICE ENSUED UNDER THE  
PERSONAL DIRECTION OF THE STATE'S DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL.  
THE CHIEF OF POLICE AND AT LEAST TEN COPS WERE SUSPENDED AND  
SOME OF THE COPS ARE IN JAIL PENDING COMPLETION OF INVESTIGATION.  
ALSO ARRESTED WAS THE CHIEF OF THE LOCAL GROUP OF THE STATE  
JUDICIAL POLICE FOUND TO BE IMPLICATED IN LEE'S ABDUCTION.

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THE STATE GOVERNOR THROUGH

THE STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL

ASKED CONSUL CONVEY TO U.S. GOVERNMENT HIS APOLOGIES FOR THE  
CRIME COMMITTED BY MEMBERS OF THE MATAMOROS POLICE AND GAVE  
HIS ASSURANCE THAT AMERICANS ALWAYS WELCOME TO VISIT TAMAULIPAS  
AND IS READY TO ASSIST ANYONE WITH A PROBLEM. END SUMMARY.

1. AT 17:00 HOURS ON MARCH 17, 1977 MR. PERRY L. GREER, 201 WEST SHORT ST., TEL 252-7723 (HOME 606-435-4153), LEXINGTON, KY. CAME TO THE CONSULATE TO REPORT THE ABDUCTION OF HIS SON LEE BY SOMEONE APPARENTLY CONNECTED WITH THE MATAMOROS POLICE, AND HAVING TO PAY US\$14,000.00 FOR HIS SON'S RELEASE. MR. GREER GAVE ME A FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE ABDUCTOR.

2. LUCKILY FOR US ON MARCH 18 THE GOVERNOR WAS TO DELIVER HIS ANNUAL REPORT IN A NEARBY TOWN, VALLEHERMOSO. THEREFORE, ALL IMPORTANT STATE OFFICIALS WERE IN MATAMOROS MOST OF WHOM WERE STAYING AT THE HOLIDAY INN. TO PREVENT A COVERUP I HAD TO CONTACT THE STATE AUTHORITIES AND DID SO THAT EVENING. AFTER SPEAKING TO THE CHIEF OF THE STATE POLICE AND THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF TOURISM I BROUGHT MR. GREER TO MATAMOROS TO PERSONALLY GIVE THEM THE FULL STORY. A SYNOPSIS FOLLOWS: AT 23:00 HOURS ON MARCH 16TH LEE DROVE TO MATAMOROS AND A FEW BLOCKS FROM THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE WAS STOPPED BY WHAT APPEARED A ROAD BLOCK WHERE SOME 12 POLICEMEN SEARCHED THE CAR. MEANWHILE AS A MAN IN MUFTI INTERROGATED LEE A COP PULLED OUT A PLASTIC BAG FROM THE TRUNK OF THE CAR AND SAID IT CONTAINED MARIHUANA. LEE SAID IT WAS NOT HIS BUT THE MAN IN MUFTI WHOM THE COPS CALLED "JEFE" (CHIEF) TOLD HIM HE WAS UNDER ARREST AND HAD TO COME WITH HIM IN LEE'S CAR. THE "CHIEF" BROUGHT ALONG A COP AND DROVE TO A PRIVATE HOUSE AND PHONED MR. GREER AFTER CONSULTING WITH ANOTHER MAN IN THAT HOUSE. AT 04:30 HOURS MARCH 16 LEE SPOKE TO HIS FATHER IN LEXINGTON BEGGING FOR HELP AND THE "CHIEF" TOLD MR. GREER UNCLASSIFIED

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HE HAD TO COME DOWN WITH US\$20,000.00 OR ELSE HE WOULD NOT GUARANTEE FOR HIS SON'S SAFETY. AT 09:00 SAME DAY MR. GREER PHONED THE ABDUCTOR AT TELEPHONE NO. 2-2273 (LISTED IN PHONE BOOK UNDER NAME OF A SECRET POLICE FORCE DISBANDED A FEW MONTHS AGO) AND TOLD HIM HE WAS COMING WITH "PART OF THE MONEY". LEE WAS THEN DRIVEN TO A FARM IN OUTSKIRTS IN THE BUICK AND AFTER A FEW HOURS IN POLICE CAR NO. 7 WAS BROUGHT TO THE CITY AND TAKEN TO A NICE HOME. AT 22:00 MR. GREEN MET THE ABDUCTOR AT THE INTERNATIONAL BRIDGE WHERE THE EXCHANGE TOOK PLACE IN POLICE CAR NO. 7. THE "CHIEF" SAID THAT FOR US\$6,000.00 HE WOULD RETURN THE BUICK.

3. ON MARCH 18 I PHONED TWICE CAPT. ANGEL ALVARO OF THE STATE JUDICIAL POLICE WHO WAS CONDUCTING THE INVESTIGATION AND WHO SAID THAT WITHIN HOURS THE CASE WOULD BE RESOLVED. AS THE TIME WAS GOING BY AND NO ARREST HAD BEEN MADE IN WHAT APPEARED TO BE AN EASY CASE, I DECIDED TO CONTACT THE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES. FIRST I BRIEFED GENERAL M. SANCHEZ ROCHA, LOCAL MILITARY COMMANDER WHO DID NOT KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE CASE AND WHO

PROMISED TO LOOK INTO THE MATTER AND PERSONALLY SPEAK TO THE GOVERNOR IN VALLEHERMOSO. AT ABOUT 17:00 HOURS I SPOKE TO CONSUL GENERAL VERNON D. MCANINCH AND ASKED FOR THE EMBASSY'S INTERVENTION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. AT MR. MCANINCH SUGGESTION I SPOKE TO LIC. FERNANDO BAEZA (THE NO. 3 MAN IN THAT OFFICE) THAT EVENING. MR. MCANINCH HAD ALREADY TOLD LIC. BAEZA I WOULD CALL. I GAVE LIC. BAEZA A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THIS BIZARRE CASE AND HE TOLD ME THAT HE WOULD GIVE A REPORT TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL. FOLLOWING MORNING LIC. BAEZA CALLED ME AT HOME SAYING THE ATTORNEY GENERAL HAD PHONED GOVERNOR CARDENAS ABOUT THIS CASE. LIC. BAEZA ASKED ME TO KEEP IN TOUCH.

AT 02:30 HOURS MARCH 19 CAPT. ALVARO PHONED ME TO SAY THAT HE HAD SEIZED THE MONEY AND CAR KEYS FROM VILLARREAL AT THE JARDIN HOTEL IN BROWNSVILLE. AT 06:00 HOURS GENERAL SANCHEZ PHONED ME WITH SAME NEWS. WITHIN NEXT 2 HOURS I INFORMED  
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MR. MCANINCH AND LIC. BAEZA OF THE RECOVERY OF THE MONEY AND CAR KEYS. DURING THE COURSE OF THE DAY MR. GREER AND LEE TESTIFIED BEFORE LOCAL STATE PROSECUTOR AND LEE IDENTIFIED THE HOUSES WHERE HE WAS KEPT DURING HIS ORDEAL. AT 11:00 HOURS MARCH 20 MR. GREER RECEIVED THE MONEY AND THE CAR AT OFFICE OF STATE PROSECUTOR IN CEREMONY PRESIDED BY STATE ATTORNEY GENERAL, LIC. RAUL ALBERTOS BETANCOURT. MATAMOROS' MAYOR ALSO WAS PRESENT AT THIS FINAL ACT.

4. I WILL TRY TO GET OUT A CLASSIFIED MESSAGE MARCH 23 WITH OTHER PARTICULARS IN THIS SERIOUS CASE.  
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Margaret P. Grafeld  
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